Claims

1.   A method of generating an illustration of a first device, the first device being one of a set of devices, the method comprising the steps of :-

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      providing a plurality of illustration templates, each illustration template corresponding to one device of the set of devices;

      choosing the illustration template corresponding to the first device; and

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      modifying the first device illustration template responsive to features of the first device to generate the illustration of the first device.

15   2.   A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the method comprises the step of generating one or more illustration templates.

      3.   A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2 wherein the plurality of illustration templates are stored in the form of a database.

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      4.   A method as claimed in any of claims 1 to 3 wherein the plurality of illustration templates are classed into two or more groups of illustration templates.

25   5.   A method as claimed in claim 4 wherein the method comprises the step of choosing the group of illustration templates corresponding to the first device before choosing the illustration template corresponding to the first device.

      6.   A method as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5 wherein modifying the first
30   device illustration template comprises the step of addition of text to the illustration template.

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7.   A method as claimed in any preceding claim wherein modifying the first device illustration template comprises the step of addition of dimensions to the illustration template.

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8.   A method as claimed in any preceding claim wherein modifying the first device illustration template comprises the step of generating an image in the illustration template.

10   9.   A method as claimed in any preceding claim wherein modifying the first device illustration template comprises the step of altering an image in the illustration template.

10.   A method as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the method comprises the step of storing data relating to the generated illustration of the first device.

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11.   A method as claimed in claim 10 wherein the data relating to the generated illustration of the first device is stored in the form of a database.

20   12.   A method as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the illustration is a two-dimensional (2-D) illustration.

13.   A method as claimed in any of claims 1 to 11 wherein the illustration is a three-dimensional (3-D) illustration.

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14.   A method as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the first device comprises a mechanical seal.

15.   A method as claimed in any of claims 1 to 13 wherein the first device comprises a mechanical pump.

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16.   A method as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the first device comprises two or more parts.

17.   A method as claimed in claim 16 wherein one of the parts comprises a mechanical seal.

18.   A method as claimed in claim 17 or 17 wherein one of the parts comprises a mechanical pump.

19.   A method of generating an illustration of a first device substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

20.   A computer program product comprising software code portions capable of performing a method as claimed in any of claims 1 to 19 when the computer program product is run on a computer system.

21.   A system for generating an illustration of a first device, the first device being one of a set of devices, the system comprising:-

        a plurality of illustration templates, each illustration template corresponding to one device of a set of devices;

        means suitable for choosing an illustration template corresponding to a first device; and

        means suitable for modifying the first device illustration template responsive to features of the first device to generate an illustration of the first device.

22.   A system as claimed in claim 21 wherein the system comprises means suitable for generating one or more illustration templates.

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23. A system as claimed in claim 21 or 22 wherein the plurality of illustration templates are stored in the form of a database.

5   24. A system as claimed in any of claims 21 to 23 wherein the plurality of illustration templates are classed into two or more groups of illustration templates.

25. A system as claimed in claim 24 wherein the system comprises means
10   suitable for choosing the group of illustration templates corresponding to the first device.

26. A system as claimed in any of claims 21 to 25 wherein the system comprises a user interface.

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27. A system as claimed in claim 26 wherein the user interface is configured to enable a user to choose the illustration template corresponding to the first device.

20   28. A system as claimed in claim 26 or 27 wherein the user interface is configured to enable a user to specify features of the first device.

29. A system as claimed in any of claims 26 to 28 wherein the user interface is located remotely from the plurality of illustration templates.

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30. A system as claimed in claim 29 wherein the user interface is suitable for remote connection to the plurality of illustration templates, for example by means of an internet and/or an intranet connection.

31. A system as claimed in any of claims 21 to 30 wherein the means suitable for modifying the first device illustration template comprises means suitable for adding text to the illustration template. .

5 32. A system as claimed in any of claims 21 to 31 wherein the means suitable for modifying the first device illustration template comprises means suitable for adding dimensions to the illustration template.

33. A system as claimed in any of claims 21 to 32 the means suitable for
10 modifying the first device illustration template comprises means suitable for generating an image in the illustration template.

34. A system as claimed in any of claims 21 to 33 wherein the means suitable for modifying the first device illustration template comprises means suitable for
15 altering an image in the illustration template.

35. A system as claimed in any of claims 21 to 34 wherein the system comprises a database to store data relating to the generated illustration of the first device.

20 36. A system as claimed in any of claims 21 to 35 wherein the illustration is a two-dimensional (2-D) illustration.

37. A system as claimed in any of claims 21 to 35 wherein the illustration is a three-dimensional (3-D) illustration.

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38. A system as claimed in any of claims 21 to 37 wherein the first device comprises a mechanical seal.

39. A system as claimed in any of claims 21 to 37 wherein the first device
30 comprises a mechanical pump.

40.   A system as claimed in any of claims 21 to 39 wherein the first device comprises two or more parts.

41.   A system as claimed in claim 40 wherein one of the parts comprises a mechanical seal.

42.   A system as claimed in claim 40 or 41 wherein one of the parts comprises a mechanical pump.

43.   A computer system as claimed in any of claims 21 to 42.

44.   A system for generating an illustration of a first device substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.